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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

COLLEGE REPUBLICANS.

THE entrance of the college into politics is a feature of the Presidential campaign of 1892. The political club, however, is not a novelty in student life, nor is the organization of Republican clubs in American colleges without precedent. Hardly a campaign has passed without this sign of the interest of college students in political affairs. Formerly these clubs were organized in a spirit of fun, simply for the pleasure they afforded those who marched in torch-light processions or attended meetings held under their auspices. This year they have been formed with a more serious purpose: the students have come to realize that college thought and educated sentiment are yearly becoming a more important influence upon public opinion. As representatives of this sentiment, the attitude of college men is of some consequence. Hundreds of young men who do not go to college share, nevertheless, the college opinions and prejudices. The college graduate enjoys the reputation of being well informed on the important questions of the day, and his convictions are often of considerable weight to voters who have not enjoyed his opportunities for study. With this thought and with the purpose to extend and strengthen the principles of the party within as well as without the colleges, students have formed Republican clubs. On the 17th of May an intercollegiate convention was held at the University of Michigan, at which further organization of Republican clubs was perfected and plans adopted for active participation in the coming campaign.

These clubs will hold public meetings at which prominent men of the party will address the students on the issues of the campaign. Incidentally the members will take an active part in speaking and organizing throughout the country during the summer and fall. The political campaign has become a contest of reason, and the election an education in intelligent judgment. To no one are the problems of the currency, commerce, and government of more interest than to the student. It is natural that he should be interested in their serious consideration, and participate in the important work of their solution. Surely at no time are men more ready to listen with fairness to the exponents of the principles of both parties, and give a decision freer from selfish interest or less biased by party prejudices, than when they are enjoying the freedom of college life. Party fealty is never weaker nor political ambition less blinding than then.

This activity of college Republicans has been the subject of criticism by the Democratic press. It is said that such organization of college students is a novelty. They doubtless have forgotten the part which Harvard University took in Massachusetts politics in the campaign of 1888. On the eve of the last Presidential election the persistent effort for four years to show

that the best thought at Harvard University was Democratic culminated in the formation of a Democratic Club at Harvard, which held a mass meeting in Boston. It was there represented that the great majority of students sympathized with a movement to which they were either entirely indifferent or directly opposed. It was then that Harvard's better self realized that it could not afford to allow a few of the prominent graduates who had become disaffected from the Republican party to misrepresent the great majority of students and graduates. This large majority who had been placed in a false position resolved that if the college was to be dragged into politics it should be at least fairly represented. On November 2, 1888, there was held in Tremont Temple a Republican mass meeting which left little doubt as to the political preferences of Harvard University. At the present time a Democratic organization exists in the college which antedates the Harvard Republican Club by several years. College political clubs are not as new as the Democracy would have us think.

Our political opponents say that the college Republican clubs are a confession of the weakness of the Republican party, which they assert is in need of their aid. The students, however, are not organizing because the Republican party needs them. Their interest as young voters in the coming election is a sufficient incentive. That more than two-thirds of them are voters appears plainly from the college records. The average age of entrance at Harvard is something over nineteen years. There are 2,658 students in the University this year. Deducting from this number those in the Freshman and Sophomore years and half those classed as special students we have left 1,800 students, who in all probability are old enough to register as voters next November. Now, is there any reason why these 1,800 students should not feel as much interest in the coming election as an equal number of voters outside the college walls? An eminent Harvard professor remarked the other day: "It is the glory of the Republican party that it interests the young men." It is a sign of strength to be able to count a large majority of those who think in support of a party which believes in the principle of protection to those who work.

Perhaps no more absurd criticism has been made than that the organization of college Republican clubs is a shrewd move of the party leaders. I cannot speak definitely of other college Republican clubs, but I know that the Harvard Republican Club, the largest political college organization, was formed entirely by members of the University, independently of any party leaders or of any outside influence. For the formation, management, and the support of this club the students alone are responsible; I have no doubt this is so in other colleges. Our purpose, we are told by the writer of one attack upon us, is "to counteract the natural result of education." I presume that the natural result referred to is a belief in Free Trade. It is not true that our colleges teach Free Trade. The instructors in Political Economy are not advocates either of free trade or of protection. They lay before the student the theories, principles, and facts, and then allow him to draw his own conclusions. They seek after the truth. Every intelligent student studies the arguments of text books, listens to the lectures, and then decides for himself. If party allegiance is indicative of his decision, the Republican party needs no counteracting influence to the natural result of education. Of the 1,619 students graduating in the classes of 1885-1892 inclusive, 1,430 have expressed their political preferences. Of these 712, or 49.8 per cent., have voted for the Republican party; 365, or 25.5 per cent., for the Democratic

party; and 353, or 24.7 per cent., have been Independents. This goes to show that the believers in the party of free trade are outnumbered in the proportion of two to one. Such statistics show a remarkable lack of that "natural result of education" which our Democratic friends think we propose to counteract by our Republican Club. It is a popular impression that a vote of these same men taken several years after graduation would show still less of that heretical disloyalty to the Republican party which they would have us believe is the inevitable effect of education. Unfortunately I have no record of such a nature; but if it is fair to judge of the politics of Harvard alumni from the politics of those of them who have held prominent offices, the result would be still more satisfactory to us. For a careful examination of the roll of Harvard alumni shows that of 153 graduates who have held high office in the State and National Governments, 114 may fairly be classed as believers in the principles of the Republican party, and 39 in those of the Democratic party.

Below is a summary of offices held by Harvard graduates from 1789 to 1891. Some have held office more than once:

	Repub- lican.	Demo- cratic.		Repub- lican.	Demo- cratic.
President of the U. S.	2	0	U. S. Senators.....	23	6
Vice-President of the U. S.	1	1	Congressmen.....	77	27
Cabinet Officers.....	10	5	Governors.....	13	6
Foreign Ministers.....	14	6	Total.....	140	51

Summary, 1856-1891:

	Repub- lican.	Demo- cratic.		Repub- lican.	Demo- cratic.
Cabinet Officers.....	4	2	Congressmen.....	18	8
Ministers.....	10	1	Governors.....	5	1
U. S. Senators.....	4	1	Total.....	39	13

The last objection that I notice to the enlistment of college men in the ranks of the Republican party is that on account of their youth. Our Democratic friends characterize it as an attempt to "rob the cradle"! Such a criticism lacks none of the humor of sarcasm, coming as it does from a party whose recent success in Massachusetts is due to leaders whose youth has evidently been no serious disqualification. The jewel of consistency does not seem to glitter in the crown of the young Democracy. In answer one need only point to two of Harvard's youngest alumni, the Hon. Theodore Roosevelt and the Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge.

JOHN LOCKWOOD DODGE,
President of the Harvard Republican Club.

THE DECADENCE OF DICKENS.

MISS THACKERAY, in that indolently charming work of hers, "A Book of Sibyls," tells how a luncheon party of six, in one of the suburbs of London—"Old Kensington," it may be conjectured—talked about Jane Austen one day, and how every member of the company, save a French gentleman who knew not English, understood a chance allusion to Selina and Maple Grove. Without insisting upon Selina to the possible mortification of any readers, except to inform the uninitiated that, like Mrs. Harris and Anthony White, she was heard of but never seen, I venture to doubt whether the author of